

From: Brett Markham
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/21/01 1:08pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a computer industry professional, well versed in both Microsoft products, and those of competitors.

I am not a pinko commie that wants Microsoft punished for being successful. I would describe myself as a distinctly pro-business guy.

However, Microsoft has engaged in such rampant abuse of free enterprise that I believe the settlement is too light.

Microsoft makes everything in its operating systems dependent upon installation of their browser, rather than competing products. In fact, one of the steps needed to make NT Y2K compliant was downloading IE4. I recently needed to install an antivirus package on an NT server, and was forced to download their IE5 as a prerequisite of upgrading the OS, not as a prerequisite of the Virus package.

That is insane. Nobody can convince me this is necessary, since no other OS in existence has that dependency.

But why their insistence on IE? BEcause of Internet Information Server, and front page. You see, using those products, it is possible to create web sites that only work with their browser. In other words, Microsoft is creating a world where no competing clients OR servers can exist.

On an ongoing basis, Microsoft deliberately introduces changes in its products that make it stop functioning with other companies' products. An example is Samba, an SMB server that operates on Unix platforms to make files on Unix servers available to Windows clients. Microsoft deliberately broke compatibility in SP3, and then again with the Win2K release.

Why? Because they are trying to force everybody in the world to abandon every other product, and install MS products instead.

And I'm sure you are aware of what goes on with laptop computers and most others. MS enters into agreements with manufacturers that essentially make MS the only choice. In and of itself, having an agreement between companies is not a problem. But margins are so narrow in the computer hardware market that the difference between a manufacturer paying \$189 and \$25 for a Windows license is the difference between a profitable company, and bankruptcy. By making these deals with manufacturers, it isn't long before others are forced to comply or go under. At best, that is an

illegal contract of adhesion.

So what happens to the consumer is he ends up buying a computer, and having to pay for MS products, even if he intends to load another OS! This automatically makes competing products more expensive for the end user. And guess what? The agreements between MS and manufacturers often deprive the manufacturer of the ability to even sell computers with competing products!

I could go on and on; and doubtless many have. Microsoft's treatment of Blue Mountain greetings after a failed buyout bid are legendary and were the source of an injunction.

Microsoft lies, steals, enters into contracts which are adhesive, forces reliance on its browser, breaks competing software, etc. etc. etc.

Anything short of separating its OS company and its application company will not work for protecting the American public.

Very truly,

Brett Markham